



Graduate Council Meeting Notes

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

10:00-11:30am

Zoom

Attendees: Alexis Hunter, Carly Woods, Evelyn King, Katrina Groth, Leila De Floriani, Lucy Qiu, Jeffrey Klauda, Hiro Iseki, Matthew Nesson, Will Reed, Henry Gittens, Alexis Lothian, Ryan O'Grady, Jason Rudy, Varaa Kukreti, Laura Schneider, Chris Ellis, Jessica Gatlin, Jonathan Poterjoy, Radu Balan, Rianna Murray, Rob Wells, TyJon Culclasure, Candace Turitto, Ross Harrison McCool, Jose Helim Aranda-Espinoza (22 voting members)

GS Staff: Kate Oravec, Robyn Kotzker, Evelyn Cooper, Laura Chapman, Fan Tsao, Heather Kissinger, Linda Macri, Brittany Humphreys, Steve Roth, Ryan Long, Waqeelat Gaji, Christopher Perez, Edith Schields, Teddy Wu, Simone Warrick-Bell, Yi Hao, Brent Hernandez, Patty Woodwell, Manny Zapata

AGENDA NOTES

1. Consent approval of [September meeting minutes](#) - reach out with any edits or questions.
2. Announcements
 - a. [Fall 2024 Open Forums](#) with the Graduate School and campus partners
 - Oct. 23, Community Engagement
 - Nov. 12, Career Support
 - b. [Associate Dean for Graduate Student Success](#) - new position; internal search
 - We won't begin the search until later in the semester, but wanted to post it before the Workday transition.
 - c. Seeking pilot programs for Spring Statement of Mutual Expectations launch in Workday
 - If you know a department doing well with Statements of Mutual Expectations, please reach out.
 - d. Society of Fellows Welcome Reception - Wednesday, Oct 16, 3:00 -5:00, The Atrium
 - This recognizes all major fellowship awardees, and invites them to begin networking with each other.
3. Proposed policy discussions
 - a. Reminder: The Graduate School is updating any policies to include gender-neutral language as appropriate, assuming the changes do not impact the intent or wording of the policy or procedure described in the policy.
 - This was introduced in the last 12 months, but sharing as a reminder and for new members.



- The changes are technical, and the spirit and intent of the policy isn't changing.
 - Changing policies to "they", or removing gender language as much as possible.
- b. Dual graduate degree credit overlap policy - proposing an update that moves away from specific credit limits to proportions of program credits, and streamlines policies for combined graduate degrees:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1l3FcNM1dDpqnkLjOwlfsmvnsQgYQJd4IVKoHysqmlc4/edit?usp=sharing>

- We've provided an overview of this policy, so that everyone has a sense of the history of dual graduate degrees.
- We have several dual graduate degrees. We also approve a handful of individually-structured dual graduate degrees. This newer policy would not be considered for any Bachelor's level degree, so combined Bachelor's + Master's would be a different policy.
- The policies we have are currently incomplete and inconsistent. The goal is to bring this all into a single policy, provide better clarity, and is an incentive for innovative dual programs.
- This is beneficial for students as it is interdisciplinary and may serve career and professional interests.
- On page 2, you can see a summary of the current policy. We have clear language around the structure of dual Master's degrees. A 25% overlap of credits are allowed to be double-counted. Some limitations here are for Master's that are only 30 credits. There is virtually no policy on structural Master's-Doctoral or Doctoral-Doctoral dual degrees.
- We are proposing to build a single policy that aligns all of these possible dual degrees with a 25% credit overlap. Any such dual-degree program that is proposed will still follow the PCC process. This doesn't change the approval process, but rather just giving direction/clarification for programs to propose dual degree programs. This would require faculty approval.
- Comment: Radu Balan - There is no policy for the Doctoral-Doctoral dual degree. The dual Masters-Doctoral program does say that under no circumstances, no student would be allowed to do a concurrent doctoral degree. I don't think this is good for the students to end up with two distinct degrees; our main task is to give students as much leeway to allow them to pursue their interests as much as possible. However, during the doctoral process, they should focus on one specific problem. If they are allowed to go in two different directions, this may weaken the degree(s). This is the reason for interdisciplinary programs. Or, there could be co-advising between differing programs to allow for the interdisciplinary nature.
 1. To the first point, the policy you are referring to is to prevent students from applying to and enrolling in 2 separate PhD programs. The



- existing structured dual doctoral program is a combination of a professional doctorate in audiology (Aud.D.) and a research Ph.D. in Hearing and Speech Sciences. This gives room for adjoining professional doctorates within their discipline.
2. An individual dual doctorate is only relevant in unique cases where a student is seeking detailed expertise, requiring two dissertation-level projects. This wouldn't be a common situation, but gives the space for faculty to consider these on a case-by-case basis.
- Comment: Hiro Iseki - Where did the 25% come from? I've worked on proposals for dual degree programs, but never heard of the 25% rule, and wanted to ensure existing programs are included. Can the students finish the two degrees in 3 years, and not 4? Is there a study that suggests this is a commonly used percentage?
 1. I don't know when this policy was originally enacted or what the rationale behind 25% is, but we are just mirroring existing policy that requires a 25% limit. The intention is that faculty within these programs would come together and think of an integrated program and achieve learning outcomes of both programs in a meaningful way.
 - a. For example, both programs have an advanced statistics course. It doesn't make sense to have the student take it twice. Nearly all are at or below that 25% level.
 - Comment: Evelyn King - when you say 12 credits if thesis and 18 if non-thesis, what if combining a thesis and non-thesis, and not combining two of the same?
 1. This discussion would occur within the structured PCC process of needing to be reviewed as part of the PCC proposal. I'd rather see it articulated by the programs in the PCC process.
 - Comment: Candace Turitto - This is only about 2 degrees that are both graduate-level degrees, correct? Is the dual audiology degree the only one presently structured on campus? How does audiology work this out as a structured mechanism (that students don't apply to 2 doctoral degrees)?
 1. Correct to both questions. Students complete the professional Doctorate of Audiology first, and then move into the PhD component, which includes research and dissertation. I don't have the answer to when this degree was approved. There is no existing policy around dual doctoral degrees, so this new policy would provide more guidance.
 2. Comment: Fan Tsao - Toyin usually handles dual degree requests, but I don't think we have had any requests for dual doctoral degrees. We've had several for dual Master's-Doctoral degrees. For the existing Audiology program, that is actually one program code that issues two



doctoral-level degrees, and does not violate the admissions practice.

Language that prohibits students from pursuing two doctoral degrees is currently on the dual degree petition form, but looking at the Graduate School policies, I don't see language.

3. Comment: Teddy Wu - Our system actually cannot handle dual degree programs, but we work with programs and manually do this.
- Comment: Candace Turitto - I'm echoing concerns with the double doctoral degree. Uniform policy is helpful and clean but on the other hand, there are some clarifications that need to be made. Would this encourage faculty/staff/students that this is a possibility, but could be a problem if we're not ready for it technologically?
- Comment: Matthew Nesson - Can you give clarification on the 25% overlap? What are you looking for or what would PCC be looking for in terms of courses? Business Analytics could have a dual degree in Communication, for example. However, these don't overlap a ton; what should we be mindful of?
 1. This is exactly where the PCC process is so important. Programs would need to provide a strong rationale for where this overlap is happening, and it may be less than 25%. It could be a joint internship program, for example.
- Comment: Radu Balan - What happens when a doctoral student then gets a Master's "along the way" in the same program? How would this 25% overlap change?
 1. This policy only applies to students getting a second degree in a *different* field. This new policy does not change the existing policy about along the way Master's within the same program.
- Comment: Candace Turitto- How many students fall into dual degrees, whether Master's-Master's, Master's-Doctoral or Doctoral-Doctoral, and how many programs would need to change structure to satisfy this? Would anybody need to go and remove a double-counted course because it exceeds the 25%?
 1. Any programs already approved would not require any changes. Only new programs would need to adhere to the 25%. I'm not aware of any that deviate at all, as all went through PCC and were approved under a rationale. The proposed policy allows more than 25% with a strong rationale. I'm not aware of any individual Doctoral-Doctoral, and AuD-PhD-HESP is the only structured Doctoral-Doctoral.
 2. We may receive around 5 individual Master's-Doctoral a year.
 3. I don't see this policy impacting Doctoral-Doctoral degrees, that's rare. This is more setting boundaries to accommodate the existing program we have in place. We are not providing enough guidance for departments who are interested in establishing this; we want to provide



guidance and clearer guardrails for programs and students, for the different varieties of dual degrees.

- Comment: Jeff Klauda - I think the wording should be limited to a professional doctorate and thesis doctorate. Have there been any cases that combine two thesis doctorates?
 1. No, good point.
- Informal vote:
 1. In favor of limiting to a professional doctorate as one of those two degrees - 14.
 - a. Strong support for this.
 2. Disagree or counter opinion to limiting doctoral language - 3.
 - a. Comment: Helim Aranda-Espinoza - This is not a very common occurrence. However, students that are capable and have the abilities to do it, should be able to.
 - b. Comment: Chris Ellis - I agree with that. There is no reason to put a roadblock in.
 - c. Comment: Alexis Lothian - I have no strong opinion, as director of an interdisciplinary program, but want to keep things as open as possible for the students. This is something not likely to occur, but there could be cases where a student wants to do something really amazing. They could get an exemption to the policy, but a block in place would be difficult since the student would already be going through a sufficient amount of evaluative rigor with something like this anyway.
- Comment: Steve Roth - As for the technical aspects of systems, SIS is limited. We are in the process of revamping and bringing in a new Student Info System. I'm reluctant to have technical challenges inform policy.
 1. Comment: Teddy Wu - Policy shouldn't be limited by technology, but the other way around.
- Comment: Candace Turitto - What we're trying to do is clarify language that is vague. I don't think I would agree to say, in this policy, "this cannot be pursued ever" and would hope that in an extenuating circumstance, someone could get an exception. But then write the policy to make it clear on the professional doctorate and dissertation doctorate, and maybe don't mention the dual dissertation program, since we don't need to address it and students will reach out to ask if they want to pursue that as an exception. It is not beneficial to block, but rather remain clear on what exactly we want to encourage.
 1. The intention of clarifying this policy is because programs are looking at this policy, seeing it's missing, and saying "forget it." I want programs to see that there is at least a path to explore this.



- Comment: Radu Balan - I don't think it's a good idea to have 2 doctoral degrees in two different programs. A professional and regular dissertation PhD may be okay. If a student wants to do extraordinary things in 2 different ways, it is easy to accomplish this within one program. Concern is that we will have many more students that won't be successful in both directions. We have a moral obligation.
 1. We do have some faculty that have dual PhDs or dual professional and doctorate degrees in SPH.
 - Poll: Limit Dual Doctoral to Professional + PhD only
 1. Yes - 59%
 2. No - 41%
 - Comment: Steve Roth - The challenges here were around the dual doctoral degree. Is anyone out there opposed to a single policy around dual graduate degrees as a whole?
 1. There is general support for this policy. I will take this back and add in clarifying language around the dual doctoral degree, and will send this back out to the Graduate Council.
 - Comment: Radu Balan - The existing policy and new policy won't impact Master's along the way. Can the new policy clarify this?
 1. We will add language that these are separate programs.
4. New Business and Discussion Items
- a. Georgia Tech has developed guidance on the Effective and Responsible Use of AI in Research. Should UMD do something similar? Should colleges develop some policy around use in culminating projects?
<https://grad.gatech.edu/sites/default/files/documents/Guidance%20for%20Effective%20and%20Responsible%20Use%20of%20AI%20in%20Research.pdf>
 - Comment: Rob Wells - I thought this statement was really well-done, and want to distribute it to my students. It is very thoughtful and comprehensive.
 - Comment: Carly Woods - I'm interested in knowing if individual units on campus have developed policy on AI. How would we negotiate at this level?
 1. If the Graduate School sets some policy, it would be to say that programs should have guidance here.
 - Comment: Hiro Iseki - I talked to the librarian that some people (other librarians) have been doing research around writing topics. It may be good to talk to them when re-thinking this topic.
 1. Comment: Linda Macri - We just scheduled a joint presentation with the Libraries about using AI ethically for searching the literature and writing.